MARY

NOT A

PERPETUAL VIRGIN,

NOR THE

MOTHER OF GOD:

BUT ONLY

A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE,

THROUGH THE WORSHIP AND MEDIATION OF

JESUS CHRIST,

HER GOD AND OUR GOD.

TOGETHER WITH A VIEW OF THE TRUE POSITION, DUTY, AND LIBERTY OF WOMAN, UNDER THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

BY THE

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MARY NOT A PERPETUAL VIRGIN, NOR THE MOTHER OF GOD.

The doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome.

The Church of Rome authorizes and enjoins the worship of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in several ways. First, by prayers offered to the Almighty in her name, for her merits, through her mediation, advocacy, and intercession. Secondly, by prayers to herself, beseeching her to employ her good offices of intercession with the Eternal Father, and with her Son, in behalf of her petitioners. Thirdly, by prayers to her for her protection from all evils, spiritual and bodily; for her guidance and aid, and for the influences of her grace. To which must be added the ascription of divine praises to her, in pious acknowledgement of her attributes of power, wisdom, goodness and mercy, and of her exalted state above all the spirits of life and glory in Heaven; and for her share in the redemption of the world, and the benefits conferred by her on the individual worshipper.

Prayers are, therefore, addressed to Mary, in the Missal and Breviary of the Romish Church, and in the works of her accredited teachers, her canonized Saints, and in the devotional books most commonly in use among her members, for her mediation, and for the direct communication of spiritual and temporal blessings. The praise of Mary is substituted for the Gloria Patri, that is, the ascription of Glory made at the end of each psalm in the public service, to the Eternal Trinity. The Church

of Rome, therefore, on some occasions, as on the Feast of the Assumption, introduces instead of this, anthems in praise of the Virgin.* Pope Leo has also granted an indulgence to all who "devoutly recite" a prayer in which "everlasting praise, honor, virtue and glory from every creature, through the boundless ages of ages" is ascribed to the "most blessed and most glorious ever Virgin Mary."† The month of May is peculiarly devoted to her worship, and called Mary's month, and festivals are observed, in honor of her nativity, of the miraculous conception, the assumption, &c., of the Virgin.‡ The worship rendered to her by the Romish Church, required even the invention of a new name properly to express its pre-eminence, and is therefore called *hyperdulia,* that is "a worship greater than, or superior to, others."§ The present Pope‖ selects for the date of his letter "this most joyful day, on which we celebrate the solemn festival of the most blessed Virgin's triumphant assumption into heaven; that she who has been through every calamity our patroness and protectress, *may watch over us, writing to you, and lead our mind by her heavenly influence* to those counsels which may prove most salutary to Christ's flock." Volumes might be, and have been composed, consisting of examples of rules, instructions, and forms of devotion, worship and prayer, for the proper service of the Virgin, selected from works published by authority in this country, and especially in more papal countries.¶ Numerous societies are now in existence whose sole bond and motive for contribution and self-denial, is their worship of the Virgin. Sir Eardley Smith, Baronet, in his pamphlet on the Romanism of Italy, gives the copy of a letter from the Virgin Mary, taking the city under her protection, which he saw placarded in large print in front of the market-house, or town hall of Messina, with a statement that the original existed, and in whose authenticity the Messinese universally believe.**

* See most full and authentic proofs in Tytler on the worship of the Virgin, p. 12 &c.
† Do. p. 17.
‡ Tytler pages 299, 300.
§ Do. on Primitive Worship. 271.
‖ Do. on the Worship of the Virgin, p. 60.5. p.
¶ See Tytler, p. 62, &c.
** Lond. 18438, 39.

The same gentleman gives a facsimile of a letter which is exhibited at Girgenti in Sicily written by the Devil to a monk.* In Spain even the customary salutations, and common courtesies of life are not exchanged without saying, "hail, spotless Virgin."† Daniel O'Connell publicly ascribes his success to the power and co-operation of the Virgin. And his liberation from prison, as well as many other great events in the history of the Church, are ascribed to the interposition of the Virgin, in a discourse delivered before his Grace, the Archbishop of Dublin at the Pontifical High Mass and Thanksgiving for the liberation of Daniel O'Connell, who is styled "Tara of the Kings."‡ This discourse closes with the following prayer:

"Hail! Hail! then, all Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope, to thee do we cry, poor banished sons of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears; turn then most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and, after this our exile ended, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Oh! most clement—most pious—most sweet Virgin Mary; pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.—Amen."

There can, therefore, be little doubt that the worship of the Virgin Mary is *practically* the religion, and the only *real* worship of a large portion of Romanists throughout the world. And since the council of Trent has excluded the Virgin from any application of the doctrine of original sin, styled her "the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, mother of God," and poured out its anathema upon all who reject these claims, and do not observe her worship,§ it becomes necessary to ask how she is regarded in the Holy Scriptures?

The doctrine and practice of the Romish Church idolatrous, and contrary to every thing recorded in Scripture of the Virgin Mary, which plainly teaches that she did not remain a perpetual Virgin.

* Do. p. 38. † Cramp. p. 67.
‡ Dublin, p. 15, &c. The whole discourse is a vindication of the worship of the Virgin. § Cramp. p. 71.

In the previous remarks we have shown the doctrine and practice of the Romish Church as it regards the deification and supreme worship paid to the Virgin Mary.

Now we have no hesitation in affirming that the entire doctrine and worship of the Virgin Mary by the Romish Church is without any foundation in Scripture; is palpably contrary to the word of God, and to the practice of the apostolic and primitive churches, and is, therefore, *inexcusable* idolatry, and most fatally dangerous to the souls of men.

"To the law, then, and the testimony," is our appeal; for whatever is contrary to these, "there is no truth in it."* The first intimation given to us that a woman was, in the providence of God, appointed to be the instrument or channel by which the Saviour of mankind should be brought into the world, was made immediately after the Fall, and at the very first dawn of the day of salvation.

The authorised English version thus renders the passage: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The Roman Vulgate, instead of the word "it," reads "she."

"The sense," says one of the most laborious of Catholic commentators, De Sacy, "is the same in one and in the other, though the expression varies. The sense of the Hebrew is,—the Son of the woman, Jesus Christ, Son of God, and Son of a Virgin, shall bruise thy head, and, by establishing the kingdom of God on earth, destroy thine. The sense of the Vulgate is,—the woman, by whom thou hast conquered man, shall bruise thy head, not by herself, but by Jesus Christ."

The only other passage in which reference appears to be made in the old testament to the mother of our Lord contains that celebrated prophecy in the 7th ch. of Isaiah, about which we are not aware that any difference exists between the Protestant and the Roman churches: "A Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

* We here incorporate some of Tytler's critical remarks.

There is, therefore, no passage in the old Testament which can by any inferential application be brought to bear on the question of Mary's being a proper object of invocation.

To pass, then, to the New Testament.

The first occasion in which the Virgin is alluded to in the New Testament is the salutation of the angel, saying, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured! the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women."* But this teaches nothing that would imply that she was more than an ordinary woman, in herself considered, since the same language "blessed among women," is applied to "Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite."†

Mary is next introduced in the salutation of Elizabeth, who addressed her as "the Mother of my Lord,"‡ that is, the mother of Him who should be her Lord. To Joseph the angel speaks of her as "Mary thy wife,"§ and in every other instance throughout the New Testament she is spoken of either as "the young child's mother," or as "his mother."

In the account of our Saviour's birth Mary is termed the "espoused wife" of Joseph, and "she brought forth," it is said, "her first-born son," which language evidently favours the conclusion that she became, what the angel calls her, "Mary his" true and married wife, and the mother of other children in her matrimonial state. For it is said in Matt. i. 25, that Joseph knew her not, TILL she had brought her first-born son." Now as the angel commanded him to "take to him Mary his wife," v. 20, and "Joseph, as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, TOOK UNTO HIM HIS WIFE, but knew her not TILL she had brought forth her FIRST-BORN son," we may reasonably conclude, in view of the well-known requirements of the Jewish law, that they THEN lived together as man and wife. In Matt. xii. 19, we are told that "his mother and brethren stood without desiring to speak with him," where all the ordinary and most approved rules of philology require the proper and usual signification of both words, and especially as there is not a particle of evidence

* Luke i. 28.
† Judges v. 24.
‡ Luke i. 43.
§ Matt. i. 20.

that Joseph had a wife before Mary, since in a subsequent chapter, (Matt. xiii. 55, 56,) his brethren Joses and Simon and Judas are spoken of in connexion with Joseph and Mary as their common parents. Such is the opinion of Whitby, Bloomfield, Campbell and others.* This opinion is supported also by the following facts, 1st, That they travelled together to Egypt, lived there several years, again returned, and dwelt together at Nazareth, and afterwards at Capernaum, and all this time as MAN AND WIFE; and that Christ was regarded as their united son, by all who knew not of his miraculous conception; and, 2ndly, that Christ always conducted himself towards them in his younger years as man and wife, and as both, therefore, having authority over him, "Till she brought forth her first-born son," says Basil, who lived as late as the 4th century, "it was necessary that she should be a virgin, but what became of her afterwards let us leave undiscussed, as being of small concern to the mystery."

The very *foundation*, therefore, of the Romish worship of the Virgin, that is, her perpetual virginity, is wanting, and the whole fabric rests upon nothing but IDOLATROUS ASSUMPTIONS.

The Scriptures plainly contradict the supposition that Mary was the mother of GOD, *and as such to be worshipped.*

Having exhibited the doctrine and practice of the Romish Church, and shown that every thing recorded of the Virgin favours the opinion that she did not remain a perpetual virgin, we proceed.

There is not the slightest evidence that Christ or his apostles, ever regarded Mary as "the Mother of God," or on any account to be honoured with worship, and treated with the reverence due even to a *relative* divinity. Let us see. When Christ was yet, *as man*, only twelve years old, his mother and Joseph, who are in the narrative *both* called his parents, made a memorable visit to Jerusalem, during which Christ was left behind while reasoning with the doctors, and asking them questions in the temple. And

* See in loco, and especially Whitby, who answers all objections founded on the language employed.

when they had returned and found Christ, Mary said to him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us, behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," to which Christ gave the remarkable answer, "how is it that ye sought me? Knew ye not that I must be about my father's business?"* "Wist ye not." Christ, you perceive, makes no distinction between Joseph and Mary, but equally reproves the want of faith in his divine nature, and his heavenly mission, which had been manifested by both.

The next passage calling for our consideration is that which records the first miracle: "and the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there, and both Jesus was called and his disciples to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, (*that is when the wine failed*) the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."

Now, let these passages be interpreted in any way which enlightened criticism and the analogy of Scripture will sanction, and I would ask, after a careful weighing of this incident, the facts, and the words in all their bearings, would any unprejudiced mind expect that the holy and beloved person, towards whom the meek and tender and loving Jesus employed this address, was destined by that omniscient and omnipotent Saviour to be an object of those religious acts with which the church of Rome now daily approaches her.

But there is another incident referred to by the three first evangelists:—"While he yet talked to the people, behold his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother." Or, as St. Luke expresses

* Luke ii. 48.

it, "And he answered and said unto them, my mother and my brethren are these who hear the word of God, and do it."

The evidence borne by this passage against our offering any religious worship to the Virgin, on the ground of her having been the mother of our Lord, seems clear, strong, direct and inevitable. She was the mother of the Redeemer of the world, and blessed is she among women, but that very Redeemer himself with his own lips, assures us that every faithful servant of his heavenly Father SHALL BE EQUALLY HONOURED WITH HER, and possess all the priviliges which so near and dear a relationship with himself might be supposed to convey. There is still another passage in which our blessed Lord is recorded under different circumstances, to have expressed the same sentiments, but in words which will appear to many even more strongly indicative of his desire to prevent any undue exaltation of his mother. "As he spake these things a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto him, blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." Christ, in reply, does not even allude to his mother, except for the purpose of instantly drawing the minds of his hearers from contemplating any supposed blessedness in her, and of fixing them on the sure and greater blessedness of his true, humble, faithful, and obedient disciples to the end of time. "But he said, yea, rather, (or as some prefer, yea, verily, and) blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

That most truly affecting and edifying incident recorded by John as having taken place whilst Jesus was hanging in his agony on the cross, an incident which speaks to every one who has a mind to understand, and a heart to feel, presents to us the last occasion on which the name of the Virgin mother of our Lord occurs in the gospels. No paraphrase could add force, or clearness, or beauty to the simple narrative of the Evangelist. But in it all, not one syllable falls from the lips of Christ, or from the pen of the beloved disciple, who records this act of his blessed Master's filial piety, which can, by possibility be construed to imply that

our blessed Lord intended Mary to be held in such honour by his disciples as would be shown in the offering of prayer and praise to her after her dissolution. "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman behold thy Son; then saith he to the disciple behold thy Mother." And he added no more.

After this not another word escapes the pen of St. John which can be made to bear on the station, the character, the person, or circumstances of Mary. After his resurrection our Saviour remained on earth forty days before he finally ascended into heaven. Many of his interviews and conversations with his disciples during that interval are recorded in the Gospel. Every one of the four Evangelists relates some act or some saying of our Lord on one or more of those occasions. Mention is made by name of Mary Magdalene, of Mary (the mother) of Joses, of Mary (the mother) of James, of Salome, of Joanna, of Peter, of Cleophas, of the disciple whom Jesus loved,—at whose house the mother of our Lord then was,—of Thomas, of Nathanael. The eleven are also mentioned generally. BUT BY NO ONE OF THE EVANGELISTS IS ANY REFERENCE MADE TO MARY THE MOTHER OF OUR LORD, AS HAVING BEEN PRESENT AT ANY ONE OF THOSE INTERVIEWS; HER NAME IS NOT ALLUDED TO THROUGHOUT.

On one solitary occasion snbsequently to the *ascension* of Christ, mention is made of Mary his mother in company with many others, and without any further distinction to separate her from the rest: "and when they were come in," it is said, (from having witnessed the ascension of our Saviour) "they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter and James and John and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brethren." Not one word, however, is said of

Mary having been present to witness even the ascension of her blessed son; we read no command of our Lord, no wish expressed, no distant intimation to his disciples that they should even show to her marks of respect and honour; nor is any allusion made to any supposed superiority or distinction and pre-eminence.

On the contrary, though we have three of the apostle John's epistles, and the second of them addressed to a lady, "whom he loved in the truth," we find neither from the tongue or from the pen of St. John, one single allusion to the mother of our Lord, alive or dead. And, then, whatever may have been the matter of fact as to St. Paul, neither the many letters of that apostle, nor the numerous biographical incidents recorded of him, intimate in the most remote degree that he knew any thing whatever concerning her individually. St. Paul does, indeed, refer to the human nature of Christ, derived from his human mother, and had he been taught by his Lord to entertain towards her such sentiments as the Roman Church now professes to entertain, could he not have had a more inviting occasion to give utterance to them. But instead of thus speaking of the Virgin Mary, he does not even mention her name or state at all, but refers only in the most general way to her nature and her sex as a daughter of Adam: "But when the fulness of time," says he, "was come, God sent forth his Son, *made of a woman*, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And thus it appears that, from a time certainly within a few days of our Saviour's ascension, THE SCRIPTURES ARE TOTALLY SILENT THROUGHOUT AS TO MARY, WHETHER IN LIFE OR IN DEATH.

The Fathers are equally opposed to the Romish doctrine and practice, with a summary of the evidence.

Having stated the doctrine and practice of the Romish Church, and the evidence of the Old Testament and also of the New Testament against the perpetual virginity of Mary, and the assumption that she was the mother of God, closing the inspired

volume, and seeking at the fountain-head for the evidence of christian antiquity, what do we find? For upwards of three centuries and a half (the utmost limit which can be put to our present enquiry,) we discover in no author, christian or heathen, any trace whatever of the invocation of the Virgin Mary by Catholic christians. I have examined, says Mr. Tytler, whom we quote, in his elaborate work on this subject,* every passage which I have found adduced by writers of the church of Rome, and any other passages which appeared to me to deserve consideration as bearing favourably on their view of the subject; and the worship of the Virgin, such as is now insisted upon by the council of Trent, prescribed by the Roman ritual, and practised in the Church of Rome, is proved by such an examination to have had neither name, nor place, nor existence among the early christians.

I have not intentionally omitted any ancient author falling within the limits of our present inquiry, nor have I neglected any one passage which I could find bearing testimony to any honour paid to the Virgin. The result of my research is, that I have not discovered one solitary expression which implies that religious invocation and honour, such as is now offered to Mary by the church of Rome, was addressed to her by the members of the primitive Catholic church. And what is the real state of the case with regard to the fact of the assumption of the Virgin Mary? It rests (as this writer most largely proves) on no authentic history; it is supported by no primitive tradition. I profess my surprise to have been great, when I found the most celebrated defenders of the Roman Catholic cause, instead of citing such evidence as would bear with it even the appearance of probability, appealing to histories written more than a thousand years after the alledged event, to forged documents and vague rumours.

It is by no means agreed among all who have written upon the subject, what was the place, or what was the time of the Virgin's death.

* In which all the passages from the fathers relating to the subject are presented and canvassed.

And it is a fact no less lamentable than remarkable, that out of the lessons appointed by the church of Rome for the feast of assumption, to be read to believers assembled in God's house of prayer, three of those lessons are selected and taken entirely from an oration of John Damascenus who lived in the middle of the 8th century.

I am unwilling to trespass upon the patience of my readers by any comment upon such evidence as this. Is it within the verge of credibility that had such an event as Mary's assumption taken place under the extraordinary circumstances which now invest the tradition, or under any circumstances whatever, there would have been a total silence respecting it in the Holy Scriptures? That the writers of the four first centuries should never have referred to such a fact? That the first writer who alludes to it should have lived in the middle of the fifth century or later; and that he should have declared in a letter to his contemporaries that the subject was one on which many doubted; and that he himself would not deny it, not because it rested upon probable evidence, but because nothing was impossible with God;—and that nothing was known as to the time, the manner, or the persons concerned, even had the assumption taken place.

We have thus then, adds Mr. Tytler, searched the Holy Scriptures, and from its first to its last page we find not one iota or tittle to suggest, or sanction, or admit of divine worship being offered to the Virgin Mary, but much every way to discountenance and forbid it. And to assure ourselves that we understand the inspired volume as our forefathers in Christ received it from the first; that what we hold on this point was the tenet of the primitive church; and that what we dread as a fundamental error was introduced by the corruptions of superstition in more recent ages; we have examined, not lightly, or for a show of argument, but patiently and uprightly, and to the utmost of our ability and means, the remains of christian antiquity. We have especially searched into the writings of those whose works, A. D. 492, received the approbation of the bishop and the council of Rome; we have diligenly sought for evidence in the records of the early councils;

and we find all, not for a few years, or in a portion of Christendom, but for five hundred years and more, and in every country in the Eastern and in the Western empire, in Europe, in Africa and in Asia, testifying as with one voice, that they knew of no belief in the present power of the Virgin, and her influence with God; no practice, in public or private, of praying to God through her mediation, or of invoking her for her good offices of intercession, and advocacy, and patronage; no offering of thanks and praise made to her; no ascription of divine honour and glory to her name. On the contrary, all the writers through those ages testify that God was to the early christians the only object of prayer; that to them Christ was the only heavenly mediator and intercessor in whom they put their trust.

The revealed truths of the Bible, and the witnesses of the Christian Church warn us, as with a voice from heaven, never to substitute Mary for Christ, not even for a moment, not by the most transient appeal to God in her name; never to seek what we need, as souls on our way to God, from any source but the Almighty, the first cause of all things, the giver of every good gift, the God of all comfort, the only rock of our salvation, the only ground of our hope; and to pour out our hearts before him alone, through his only Son alone, who is the way, the truth and the life.

The Virgin Mary was a sniner saved by grace, and the absurdity of the Romish doctrine.

Having now proved that by the testimony both of the Old and New Testaments the doctrine and practice of the Romish Church is false and idolatrous, and contrary also to the opinion and practice of the early fathers, we proceed.

From all that has been said, it is manifest that Mary was *by nature* as weak, sinful, guilty and corrupt, as any other woman; that whatever goodness or holiness of character she was enabled to manifest, was the result of divine grace—of the imputation of Christ's righteousness—and of the in-working of Christ's Spirit;

and that the only dignity attached to her is the high honor and privilege of being chosen as the instrument through whom the Son of God, by his own divine power, and the miraculous agency of the Holy Ghost, was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. The Scriptures every where teach that all human hearts, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, are corrupt and depraved. (Jer. xvii. 10. Prov. xxvii. 19. Matt. xv. 18, &c.) The Scriptures further teach, that Christ, as manifest in the flesh, was the only exception to this universal rule, and the only individual who was exempted from this universal curse. Of Him alone is it ever said, that "he was without sin." (Heb. iv. 15,) and that he is "therefore able to save to the uttermost," "for such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." (Heb. vii. 25, 26.) Christ is thus contrasted with all other *possible* priests, intercessors and mediators, because he was sinless and impeccable in his nature. And that the human nature of Christ was indebted to the Virgin for nothing beyond nourishment and support, is most fully and emphatically taught in Luke i. 35, where the angel informed Mary that "the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the highest overshadow her, therefore, also, that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called The Son of God." And it is here also distinctly taught that Mary was selected for this high office, not from any merit or peculiar worthiness in her, but,—in accordance with God's plan in other cases,—by God's sovereign election and unmerited favor. (Luke i. 28, 30, compared with Rom. v. 1, 4. Rom. xi. 6.) And that Mary herself was conscious of her own sinfulness, and depended for salvation *altogether* upon the redemption that should be wrought out by that incarnate Saviour whom she was honoured to bring into his human manifestation, is most evident from her own words, (Luke i. 46, 47,) "and Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord, AND MY SPIRIT HATH REJOICED IN GOD MY SAVIOUR, for HE hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maid; FOR HE THAT IS MIGHTY hath done to me great things." Therefore she

says, "from henceforth shall all generations call me blessed," that is, happy, or favoured of God, as are all who come under the several characters described by our Saviour in his sermon on the Mount. (Matt. v. &c.,) MARY SHOULD BE, AND SHE IS HONOURED, not for any thing she was or is, in herself considered, but for the peculiar favour and privilege conferred on her by the mercy of God.

THE WORSHIP which is so prominently given by the Romish Church, therefore, to the Virgin Mary is in plain and manifest contradiction to the whole teaching of Scripture, as it regards what the Virgin should be; what she was; what she did; and what she herself said and believed; also to what Scripture teaches about the nature of man universally, and of Christ especially, as the only exception to the universal character of men; to the exclusive mediation and intercession of Christ, "who is the one mediator between God and man;"—and to the fact that divine worship is only to be given to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Such worship, therefore, leads to the subversion of the Scriptures; to plain, palpable and undeniable idolatry; and to the overthrow of the only foundation upon which any sinner can repose a sure and certain hope of present salvation, and everlasting life.

"Let every refinement of distinction," says Mr. Tytler, be applied between the honour due to God, and the honour paid to the Virgin; between the advocacy of Christ and the intercession of Mary; between prayers direct and prayers oblique; between the hope and confidence which the apostles, both by their teaching and example, bid the faithful christian rest on,—God's mercy in Jesus Christ; and the hope and confidence which the canonized saints, and the doctors and Popes of the Church of Rome profess to place in the power and mercy of Mary; let every explanation which ingenuity can devise, be applied here, and the practical upshot of the whole is a tendency, sometimes direct and absolute, sometimes indirect and inferential, and circuitous, and so the more perilling and beguiling, to dispossess

our Saviour of many, nay even of all his saving and redeeming functions, and to leave to him only the stern, unapproachable character of a judge; to wean the affections from God, and to fix them upon Mary; to make the personal application of his blood and merits, whereby alone we can for a moment stand in the place of sons and realize the spirit of adoption, to become de pendent on her intercession; to represent all the blessings and graces of the Holy Spirit, his converting and enlightening grace, his protecting and guiding grace, his strengthening grace, as all shut up in a sealed fountain till her benign and divine influence open it, and convey THROUGH HERSELF such portions of the heavenly treasure AS SHE WILL to those who have secured her omnipotent patronage; to lead believers on her to regard Mary as the way, and God in Christ as the truth and the life, approachable only by that way; in a word, to hold forth the Lord God omnipotent, the gracious, merciful, loving Father, as an object of awe and terror, as the inflexible dispenser of divine justice, inflexible *except when his love for Mary* bends him to be merciful to her votaries; and thus to make her, in very and practical truth, (though not theoretically, perhaps) the nearest and dearest object of a christian's love."

Now the absurdity of such a theory is not less evident than its dreadful impiety. And of this we may learn instruction even from a Scottish peasant.

A Scottish nobleman, of the Roman Catholic persuasion, lived a very retired life, and left his affairs very much in the hands of others. One of his tenants, named Donald, rented a farm upon which his forefathers lived above two hundred years. The lease by which he held was on the point of expiring, and the steward refused to allow Donald a renewal, wishing to give it to a friend of his own. Poor Donald tried every argument in his power with the steward, but in vain. At length he determined to make his case known to his lordship himself; but at the castle door he was repulsed, the steward having given orders that he should not be admitted.

Donald, almost in despair, resolved on a bold measure. He climbed over the garden wall, and entering a private door, made his way unobserved towards the apartments of the nobleman. As he drew near he heard his lordship's voice engaged in prayer; and waiting till he should conclude, distinctly heard him pleading earnestly with the Virgin Mary and St. Francis to intercede with the Father and Son in his behalf.

After the voice ceased Donald gently knocked at the door, was admitted, and made the case known to the nobleman, who, greatly moved by his tale, assured him that his lease should be renewed, and himself and family protected from the resentment of the steward. Donald poured forth his earnest and artless thanks, and was about to take leave, when a feeling of anxiety for the generous nobleman took possession of his mind, and he addressed him thus:

"My lord, I have been a bold man, but you have forgiven me, and saved me and my family from ruin. I would again be a bold man, and say something farther, if I have your permission."

"Well, Donald, speak out," said the nobleman."

"My lord," replied Donald, "as I stood waiting at your door, I heard you praying with great earnestness to the Virgin Mary and St. Francis: you seemed to be very unhappy. Now, my lord, forgive me, but I cannot help thinking that the Virgin Mary and St. Francis will do you but little good. I had been a ruined man if I had trusted to your servants; I came direct to your lordship, and you heard me. Now, if you would but leave the Virgin Mary and St. Francis, who I know will do no more for you than your steward would for me, and just go direct to the Lord Jesus himself, and pray to him for what you need, he will hear you and grant the desires of your heart; for he has said in his word, "him that cometh to ME I will in no wise cast out."

The Romish doctrine of the Virgin, is the source of the most demoralizing and unchristian theories of the merit of virginity and celibacy, with a view of the true position, duty, and liberty of woman under the gospel dispensation.

Having now established the unscriptural, absurd and idolatrous character of the Romish doctrine of the Virgin, we proceed to make some closing remarks.

Now, as one error never comes alone, but drags others along with it, so do we find that on this one error regarding the perpetual virginity, assumption and worship of the Virgin Mary, is based the enormous and most demoralizing doctrines of the Romish Church, respecting the merit of virginity and celibacy; the degradation of marriage-life, as if unholy and imperfect; the dignity and merit of a life of seclusion from the world; and all the ten thousand evils which have flowed from monasteries, nunneries, and the *constrained* celibacy of their inmates; and from the withdrawment from society of that salt which would purify it, that light which would enlighten it, and that active zeal which would regenerate and bless it.

Hence it is, that even in this enlightened age, and in this enlightened city, we find men claiming to be *Right* Reverend, and *Very* Reverend, who are not ashamed to dress themselves up as Merry Andrews, and before an invited public, go through the farce of covering some poor female, deluded with the hope of meriting heaven by excluding herself from all the rights, privileges, duties and means of usefulness, which the God of heaven himself bestowed upon her, in order to affront Him, his word, his cause, the nature and mission he has assigned to the female sex, and the reason and social nature he has given to man, by immuring herself in a cloister, and hiding those talents in a napkin God had given her to put out to usury for Him, that when he comes, he may find his own with other talents also.

With such facts occurring before our eyes, surely we are called upon to examine into the grounds which lead to such melancholy and most pitiable results; and while we commend to God's mer-

cy those who are so deluded and blinded by self-interest, self-righteousness or prejudice; to remember for our own guidance and the direction of our children, the words of the apostle in reference to precisely similar practices among the Gentiles, and which originated among them also from a perversion of the original prophecy respecting the son of a Virgin mother. "Let no man" says he, (Col. 2.) "beguile you of your reward" in heaven, "by an affected humility, and the worship of" saints, angels, and virgins, as Diana and others. Such men are "vainly puffed up by their fleshly" and corrupt minds, introducing into the christian religion the vain and idolatrous practices of heathen nations, "and they do not hold the Head," even the Lord Jesus Christ, by whose gracious presence, Spirit and power, the whole body of his Church is "knit together and increaseth with all the increase of God," being thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work, and enabled to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. "Wherefore," adds the apostle, "if ye be dead with Christ," as ye profess to be, to any further dependence on those opinions and practices which are the "rudiments of the world," and in its view adapted to secure the favour of heaven, "why as though *still* living in the world, are ye subject to these ordinances." For whereas God teacheth that "every creature of God is good, and to be received with thanksgiving," and that "marriage is honourable in all," and that "if any man will be Christ's disciple he must take up his cross and deny himself, and follow him daily," even as in the world "he went about doing good," they, on the contrary teach, that as it regards all such things you must act on the principle of entire avoidance, and "touch not, taste and handle them not." Thus do the "commandments and doctrines of men" run counter to the wisdom of God, and make those things essential to religion, and worthy of divine favour, which, in God's estimation, are only circumstances in the present life, "which all are to perish in the using." It is true, adds the apostle, "these things have a show of wisdom," and appear to flow from self-denying virtue, and willing, self-chosen, voluntary

worship, "neglecting of the body," and crucifixion of the natural desires and feelings "of the body." But, says the apostle, all this sanctity, and self-denial, and austerity is only apparent; it is selfish, it is carnal. It is not that true mortification and self-denial which leads the christian, for the love of Christ, to undertake every service, and in every relation of life, to serve, honour and glorify God, by promoting His will in the family, in the household, in the social circle, in the Church, and in the world. This course tends only to puff men up with a vain conceit of their *own* sanctity, and to fill the heart with self-complacency, ostentation, and contempt of others, and is, therefore, as contrary to the will of God and the genius of christianity as are the grossest sensualities and the most degrading idolatries.

"Stand fast therefore, and rejoice," my female friends, in that glorious liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again brought into bondage to the corrupt and enslaving, *however sanctimonious*, dogmas of a superstitious church; which has in this respect substituted pagan for christian worship, and pagan for christian practice.* For what else is "the Queen of heaven," as the Virgin is blasphemously called, than the very same Goddess among the heathen; and what else is this practice of virginity and celibacy than the introduction of the corresponding heathen sentiments and practice. God, my female friends, has given you a high and a noble mission. "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female," but we are all one,—all alike his disciples to learn his will; his servants to do it; his followers to wait upon him; his subjects to obey him; and his willing and grateful friends, that we may, to the very utmost of our ability and opportunity extend his kingdom, and promote the salvation of our fellow-men. When on earth, therefore, Christ was ever attended by the faithful and devoted women. When he stood at the bar of Pilate, they were the boldest and the nearest. When on the cross,—they did not forsake him. When in the sepulchre,—they were the first to minister unto him. When risen,—they were found in that upper chamber where the disciples met to pray and

* See Appendix.

hope. When his apostles were imprisoned,—they were with the brethren making prayer and supplication unto God. Every where, women were found among the fellow-labourers and helpers of the apostles, and ready to every good work. In all the primitive churches, every where, they gave themselves, in every proper manner, to the furtherance of the gospel,—as deaconesses to labour, under church authority, among their own sex,—as Dorcas's, to make garments for the poor, or as Priscillas', to instruct privately those who wished to know more perfectly the way of the Lord.

Your favour, however, in God's sight, christian female, does not depend upon your being either in a state of virginity or matrimony. Both are open to you,—both free,—and both honourable. You are left to act in this matter as Providence shall direct, prudence dictate, and your own judgment approve. If you marry you do well, and if you remain single you do well. In both you may be happy, and in both useful; only that in the latter case you can be *truly* happy, and *fully* serve Christ, only by "marrying in the Lord; for how can two walk together, unless they be agreed," "and what fellowship," or heart-communion can they have who do not worship and serve the same Redeemer. But let it also be borne in mind, my female friends, that in both these conditions you may be guilty, sinful, miserable, and condemned sinners, "without God, and without hope in the world," and amid all your personal attractions, and your vain and flattered pride, loathsome and polluted in the sight of a holy and omniscient God. "Marvel not," then, that I say unto you, my female friends, "ye must be born again," since that which "was born of the flesh is no more than flesh," and "that" alone "is spirit, which is born of the Spirit." This, then, must decide your state and condition in the sight of God. An unregenerate female "heart is deceitful, and desperately wicked," even as as others, and is only the *more* dreadful a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men, as it stands contrasted with all those *naturally* amiable qualities lavished on it by God, and which ought to predispose it to piety and heavenly devotedness. AND IF THEREFORE IMPENITENCE HARDENS, DEFILES, SOURS,

CORRUPTS, AND RENDERS HIDEOUS THE HEART OF MAN, IT MAKES STILL MORE MORALLY MONSTROUS THE HEART OF WOMAN.

Yes, my female friends, piety is the gem of your heart; the crown of your nature; the perfection of your beauty; the only charm that will impart peace and joy to your own bosom; that will diffuse serenity and happiness around you; and that,—outlasting youth, and mere outward beauty,—will invest you with a loveliness "ever fair, and ever young," perpetuate the attraction of your society and character, and gild even your dying bed with the reflected lustre of a heavenly brightness. The richest gem of all others which encircles the coronet of a lady's character, is unaffected piety. Nature may lavish much on her person,—the enchantment of the countenance, the gracefulness of her mien, and the purity of her intellect; yet her loveliness is uncrowned, till piety throws around the whole the sweetness and power of its charms. Woman then becomes unearthly in her temper—unearthly in her desires and associations. The spell which bound her affections to things below is broken, and she mounts on the silent wings of her fancy and hope to the habitation of God, where it will be her delight to hold communion with the spirits that have been ransomed from the thraldom of earth, and wreathed with a garland of glory.

"The beauty of woman may throw its magical charm over many; princes and conquerors may bow with admiration at the shrine of her riches, the sons of science and poetry may embalm her memory in song, yet piety must be her ornament, her pearl. Her name must be written in the "book of life," that when mountains fade away, and every memento of earthly greatness is lost in the general wreck of nature, it may remain and swell the list of that mighty throng which have been clothed with the mantle of righteousness, and their voices attuned to the melody of heaven." O, if there is one sight more than any other which might make angels weep, it is an unsanctified female "who is dead even while she lives," and fast passing away from the false flattery of a world that would betray her to her ruin, to the unalterable doom of

her inexorable judge. And, if, on the other hand, there is one sight more than any other, over which angels may rejoice, it is the sight of female youth, and beauty, and attraction, all devoted to the Saviour, and with all their mighty influence consecrated to the exaltation and glory of His name, and the advancement of his cause in the salvation of souls.

Be persuaded, then, ye impenitent, halting, and procrastinating wives, and sisters, and daughters, to yield yourselves at once to him who put such honour on your nature as to enter the Virgin's womb; to call one of your sex his mother; to call all who love and obey him, his mothers and sisters; to break down all the restraints of caste, of oriental seclusion, of pagan virginity, and of hard-hearted degradation; and to open up to you such opportunities for improvement, for happiness, and for usefulness in the world. And, if you are already Christ's, be persuaded to love him more and serve him better, that your zeal and activity, your charity to the poor, and to the heathen, and your exertions to promote every good word and work, may put to shame the blasphemy of those who say that the motives of the gospel are powerless, and that it is only the idolatrous superstitions of virgin worship and virgin practice which can lead to devotion and self-denial in the work of the Lord.

Finally, let me urge you who believe and hope in the Saviour, but are afraid to profess his name and become his disciples, to be rebuked by the example of those many christian heroines which shine as stars in the firmament of heavenly truth, and are encircled by such a halo of glory in the sacred page of revelation. Go to Ruth, that like her you may be able to forsake home and kindred, and cleave only to the Lord, saying to his Church and people, "whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." Go to the cross and sepulchre, that you may there weep with those brave, heroic women, and ask with hearts willing to be

his, and his for ever, "where is my Lord, for we have come to seek him." Go to Christ's own blessed word, and as you there hear him saying, "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty,"—let your hearts bow to him in thankful joy, and let your conduct say "come, and let us go up to the house of the Lord, that we may there enter into a perpetual covenant with him, and taking the cup of salvation into our hands, pay our vows unto the Lord in the presence of the congregation."

God grant it, and to his name, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, shall be everlastiug praise, Amen.

We add, as very appropriately closing this discussion, the two following extracts:

INFLUENCE OF WOMAN.

BY REV. F. L. HAWKS, D. D.

Whatever power woman may exert over society in the walks of literature and science, she has a more peculiar sphere, a sphere sacred to herself alone. Her realm is the domestic circle, around the family fire-side, and the family altar. She is, under God, the honoured source, the gentle and lovely minister of whatever of purity and brightness sheds its lustre there. From her are to proceed, through grace, those celestial influences, which combined with what is best of earth, shall prepare the interesting group around her not only for the duties of life, but shall educate them for eternity. Of the young minds, just starting forward upon life's difficult and dangerous career, she is to be the first instructor. Their faculties expand beneath her eye, depend upon her for their earliest culture and direction, and are to be trained and formed by her for good or for evil. Upon those minds she is to leave the impress of her own.—To use the fine illustration of another, "she is to take the young spirit, as it were, from the hands of its Creator and continue the process of creation just where the Deity left off."

Here, then, is the first point of view under which the influence of woman presents itself as of unspeakable magnitude and importance. And here is presented the main ground on which we advocate her thorough moral and intellectual education. Nothing short of this can prepare her for the high and solemn duties which her future

life will bring. Those duties, whether she be prepared to discharge them or not, will devolve upon her. In any case she must do the work for which she is destined, and incur the tremendous responsibilities which her destiny involves, whether she goes to them strong in virtue and knowledge, or in ignorance and spiritual inefficiency. Let, then, the education she receives be adapted to her position and duties, as the priestess of the domestic altar, as the first teacher and the beloved and honored companion of her children. Let its grand object be to prepare her for her future duties in these relations. For surely it is not a matter of light importance how so holy, so awful a task as her's shall be performed. On the manner in which she discharges it depend the very highest moral results, the best interests of society, the prevalence or downfall of morality, civilization, religion, and the fear of God. The wisdom of books, the instructions of the pulpit, the examples of public virtue, purity, and nobleness, generally speaking, act not upon the minds of the young, until they have passed away in a measure from under the formative influence and moral control of the mother. If they act at all during the period of her tutorage they act indirectly, as lights reflected unto the minds of her children through the medium of her own, as auxiliary influences which she applies and directs. Her directions are obeyed, her teachings respected, her example seen and studied, and imitated, when other instructions are ineffectual, other examples without power to call forth attention and emulation. And thus God has committed to her hands the guardianship of immortal spirits, the moulding of minds which are to live, grow, and expand forever, of minds which are to be influential each in its sphere, minds which are to act on other minds and influence them in time and eternity. Truly, then, hers is a noble destiny. What though she is not called to move in those public spheres of political effort which man occupies, or to exercise any visible influence over those grand movements and revolutions of society upon which the existence of nations and of empires depend? What though there be assigned to her no place in the cabinet, in the Senate chamber, in the camp or upon the battle-field? Still to her, in God's wise providence, is committed an agency which may direct and control these very movements. For every mind which acts in producing them has once been under her culture. She had the first adjustment of those secret springs which display their tendency and power in such mighty results? In her unobtrusive and silent sphere of action she may be sustained by the remembrance that her influence upon society is all the surer because her agency is the first and the most powerful. Much more may she be sustained by the peculiar and lofty consciousness, that "in communicating the eternal principles of truth to minds destined for immortality, she is doing what can never cease to be felt; and when the kingdoms and empires of earth have melted away and are forgotten,

when the eloquence and wisdom of senators, with the courage of warriors shall have passed away, her labours will be known and acknowledged, and eternally be seen to be unfolding in new and glorious results."

Great indeed is the task assigned to woman, who can elevate its dignity? Not to make laws, not to lead armies, not to govern empires, but to form those by whom laws are made, armies led, and empires governed, to guard against the slightest taint of bodily infirmity the frail yet spotless creature whose moral no less than physical being must be derived from her; to inspire those principles, to inculcate those doctrines, to animate those sentiments which generations yet unborn and nations yet uncivilized shall learn to bless; to soften firmness into mercy and chasten honor into refinement; to exalt generosity into virtue; by a soothing care to allay the anguish of the body and the far worse anguish of the mind; by her tenderness to disarm passion; by her purity to triumph over sense; to cheer the scholar sinking under his toil: to console the statesman for the ingratitude of a mistaken people; to be compensation for friends that are perfidious, for happiness that has passed away. Such is her vocation. The couch of the tortured sufferer, the prison of the deserted friend, the cross of the rejected Saviour—these are theatres on which her great triumphs have been achieved. Such is her destiny, to visit the forsaken, to attend to the neglected when monarchs abandon, when counsellors betray, when justice persecutes, when brethren and disciples flee, to remain unshaken and unchanged; and to exhibit in this lower world a type of that love, pure, constant, and ineffable, which in another world we are taught to believe the test of virtue.

Blackwood's Magazine.

APPENDIX.

"It is," says the author of Mariolatry, London, 1841, 2d Ed. p. 7, "a well-attested fact, that no divine honours were given, earlier than the fourth century, to the blessed Virgin Mary, of whom no 'true member of the Anglican branch of the Catholic Church, either can or will speak disparagingly or irreverently." The first persons upon record, as offering divine honours to her, were the Collyridians, who derive their name from the κολλυριδες, or certain cakes, which they offered annually to Saint Mary, in sacrifice, upon her festival, when they worshipped her as a goddess. This superstition came from Thrace, and the yet more distant regions of Scythia and Arabia. While they were mere pagans, they had been accustomed to bake and present similar cakes to the goddess Venus, or Astarte (the moon;) and after they professed Christianity, they thought that this honour might now be best shown to Mary. This superstition was condemned by Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis and a canonized saint of the Romish Church, in as strong terms as if he had foreseen the hyperdulia or transcendent kind of service with which Romanists would one day worship the Virgin Mary. 'What Scripture (he says) has delivered anything concerning this? Which of the prophets have permitted a man to be worshipped, that I may not say a woman? For a choice vessel she is indeed, but yet a woman.'.....'The body of Mary was holy indeed, but NOT God. The Virgin, indeed, was a virgin and honourable, but not given to us for adoration, but one that did herself worship Him who was born of her in the flesh, and [who] came down from heaven out of the bosom of his Father.' After censuring the Collyridians at considerable length for invoking the Virgin as a goddess, he sums up the whole in the following very emphatic terms:—'LET MARY BE IN HONOUR; *but let the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit be worshipped.* LET NO ONE WORSHIP MARY.'

"The worship of the Virgin Mary, which had continued to spread between the fourth and ninth centuries, was in the tenth century carried much further than before. Towards its close the custom became prevalent, in the Latin or Western Church, of celebrating masses and abstaining from flesh on Saturdays, in honour of Saint Mary. In the next place, the *Daily or Lesser office of Saint Mary* was introduced, which was subsequenty confirmed by Urban II. in the Council of Clermont. And lastly, tolerably

distinct traces of the Rosary and Crown of Saint Mary, as they are called, or of praying according to a numerical arrangement, are to be found in this century. The Rosary consists of fifteen pater nosters, or repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and one hundred and fifty ave marias, or salutations of the Virgin Mary; and the *Crown of Saint Mary* consists of six or seven repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and sixty or seventy salutations. Succeeding ages have witnessed the invention of additional superstitious services in honour of the Blessed Virgin."

"From their crowd of deities," says the author of Pagan Rome, Lond. 1838, p. 26 27, "each profession chose a patron. The musicians were headed by Apollo, the sailors by Neptune, the labourers by Ceres. Every town had its protecting goddess. Athens adored more particularly Minerva. Rome had chosen Jupiter Capitolinus. Each god had his attributes. Apollo was invoked against the plague; Juno presided at child-birth; and on the different spots, temples were erected to all these deities of human creation. In some of these chapels sacrifices were offered; others were for a pilgrimage; in a third, was a record of some miraculous cure, performed by the invocation of the deity. A sailor escaped from shipwreck, here hung his clothes in the chapel of his protectress; a recovered cripple here hung up his crutch. The following is an extract from Tibullus, 'come now, oh goddess, come to my help, for the numerous pictures hung in thy temple prove that thou hast the power to save us.'

"Again, strong proof exists in the present time of the deification of this crowd of beings; the temples which the Pagans erected to these demi-gods may still be seen at Rome; that city is full of them.

"These temples have merely changed their names, and the inscriptions which they bear declare that these very chapels, now dedicated to Christian saints, were constructed in former times, in honour of the Pagan deities. The temple which was once consecrated to Juno, is now that of St. Michael; the temple of Hercules, that of St. Stephen, and that once sacred to Neptune, is now to St. Mary of Egypt.

"The twelve temples at Rome, now dedicated to the Virgin, were formerly raised in honour of Jupiter Teretrius, the good goddess, Apollo, Capitolinus, Hercules, Venus, Isis, Mars, Vesta, Jupiter Stator, Minerva, Apollo and Diana, Saturn and Opis, and lastly, the Pantheon, which was once sacred to all the gods of Olympus, is now consecrated to all the saints of Paradise."

"The religion of the Ceres of Enna," says Middleton in his Letter from Rome, Lond. 1741, 4th Ed., p. 197–200, "was celebrated, as Cicero informs us, with a wonderful devotion, both in public and private, through all Sicily: for her presence and divinity had been frequently manifested to them by numerous prodi-

gies, and many people had received immediate help from her in their utmost distress. Her image therefore in that Temple was held in such veneration, that whenever men beheld it, they fancied themselves beholding either Ceres herself, or the figure of her at least not made by human hands, but dropt down to them from heaven. Now if in the place of Ceres of Enna, we should insert into this relation, our Lady of Loretto, or of Impruneta, or any other miraculous Image in Italy; the very same account would suit as exactly with the history of the Modern Saint, as it is told by the present Romans, as it formerly did with that of Ceres, as it is transmitted to us by the Ancients. And what else indeed are all their miraculous Images, which we see in every great town, said to be made by Angels, and sent to them from heaven, but mere copies of the ancient Fables, of the Διοπετες Αγαλμα, or Image of Diana dropt from the clouds; or the Palladium of Troy, which, according to old Authors, was a wooden statue three cubits long, which fell from heaven.

"In one of their churches here, they shew a picture of the Virgin, which, as their Writers affirm, was brought down from heaven with great pomp, and after having hung a while with surprizing luster in the air, in the sight of all the Clergy and people of Rome, was delivered by Angels into the hands of Pope John the First, who marched out in solemn procession, in order to receive this celestial present. And is not this exactly of a piece with the old Pagan story of King Numa, when in this same City, he issued from his palace, with priests and people after him, and with public prayer and solemn devotion received the ancile, or heavenly shield, which in presence of all the people of Rome, was sent down to him with much the same formality from the clouds?

"In one of the Churches of Lucca," says the same author, "they show an Image of the Virgin with the Child Jesus in her arms, of which they relate this story, 'That a blaspheming Gamester, in rage and despair, took up a stone and threw it at the Infant; but the Virgin, to preserve him from the blow, which was levelled at his head, shifted him instantly from her right arm into the left, in which he is now held; while the blasphemer was swallowed up by the earth upon the spot; where the hole, which they declare to be unfathomable, is still kept open and enclosed only with a grate, just before the Altar of the Image. The Virgin however received the blow upon her shoulder, whence the blood presently issued, which is preserved in a Chrystal, and produced, with the greatest ceremony, by the Priest in his vestments, with tapers lighted, while all the company kiss the sacred relique on their knees.'"

The Frontispiece to the work on Mariolatry, is a representation of the measure of the Virgin Mary's foot, for the kissing of which, together with the recital of three ave marias, three hundred

years' indulgence is conferred. In the original engraving the figure is rather more than seven inches long: it has been reduced a little to bring it within the compass of a page. This engraving is sold at Naples for half a grano (about five-sixths of a farthing,) and a copy of it, framed and glazed, in 1840, was suspended near an altar, in the church of St. Gennaro de' Poveri, on the right hand, on entering. The following is a translation of the inscription:—

'The exact measure of the foot of the most blessed Mother of God [is] drawn from her true shoe, which is preserved with the highest devotion in a monastery in Spain. Pope John XXII. granted three hundred years' indulgence to every one who shall kiss this measure three times, and shall recite three ave marias: and this was confirmed by Pope Clement VIII. in the year of our redemption, 1603.

'This indulgence, not having any prescription as to number, may be obtained as often as the devotees of the most holy Virgin shall please; it may also be applied to souls in purgatory; and for the greater glory of the Queen of Heaven, it is permitted to draw from this measure other similar [measures,] which shall have all the same indulgence.

'Mary, Mother of grace, pray for us.'

"It would require a volume," says this writer, "to describe the multifarious votive offerings made to the Virgin in the different churches at Rome only. We may, however, state, from the information communicated to the author by an eye-witness recently returned from Italy, that among the thousands of votive offerings to the Madonna del Parto, who is venerated in the church of St. Agostino, at Rome, there are (apparently made of embossed silver) only 6413 hearts, 93½ pairs of eyes, 227 legs, 67 arms, 11 breasts, 3 hands, and 13 kneeling figures, 214 glazed cases of various objects, such as hearts, arms, legs, breasts, &c., &c., which appear to be of pure silver; and 171 paintings on wood and pasteboard, representing various deliverances supposed to have been wrought by the intercession of the Madonna del Parto, whose picture enters into the composition of nearly all these paintings. 'So that (as Dr. Middleton justly but severely remarks, concerning similar pictorial votive offerings made to the Virgin) it may be truly said of her, what Juvenal says of the goddess Isis, whose religion was at that time in the greatest vogue at Rome, that the painters got their livelihood out of her:—

> "Pictores quis nescit ab Iside pasci?
>
> As once to Isis, now it may be said,
> That painters to the Virgin owe their bread."